

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PARIS 0426

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US

SUBJECT: CONCORDE--WHAT TO DO WHEN THE DECISION COMES

1. SUMMARY--THE TEL EXAMINES THE RANGE OF POSSIBLE CONTINGENCIES BY WAY OF A CONCORDE DECISION, THE IMPLICATIONS IN EACH CASE FOR FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, AND HOW THE EMBASSY WOULD ENVISAGE COPING WITH (OR EXPLOITING) EACH OF THESE STILL HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS. RELEVANT BACKGROUND MATERIAL FROM THE DEPT. IS REQUESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. AS THE MOMENT DRAWS NEARER FOR THE USG DECISION ON WHETHER TO AUTHORIZE CONCORDE SERVICE TO THE US, WE MUST LOOK AHEAD TO THE IMPACT THIS DECISION WILL HAVE ON FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND TO PRACTICAL STEPS THE EMBASSY CAN TAKE. ON THE ONE HAND, WE MUST BE QUICK TO EXPLOIT A FAVORABLE DECISION IN ORDER TO ENHANCE THOSE RELATIONS AND THE IMPROVED CLIMATE FOR COOPERATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE DECISION IS UNFAVORABLE IN WHOLE OR IN PART, WE MUST BE NO LESS QUICK TO MINIMIZE THE DAMAGE TO FRANCO-CONFIDENTIAL

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AMERICAN RELATIONS.

3. AS WE SEE IT, THE CONTINGENCIES WHICH THE EMBASSY MUST ANTICIPATE IN ITS ADVANCE PLANNING RANGE AS FOLLOWS: (A) A FAVORABLE USG DECISION ON AMENDMENT OF THE CARRIERS' OPERATING SPECIFICATIONS, FOLLOWED BY FAA APPROVAL OF LANDING AT DULLES; (B) THEN NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY APPROVAL OF LANDINGS AT JFK OR (C) DISAPPROVAL; (D) A NEGATIVE USG DECISION ON AMENDMENT OF THE OPERATING SPECIFICATIONS. EACH OF THESE CONTINGENCIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IS DISCUSSED BELOW.

4. WHEN ONE LOOKS AT CONTINGENCY (A) THE TEMPTATION MIGHT BE GREAT TO CONCLUDE THAT THE FRENCH WOULD SIMPLY ACCEPT AS THEIR DUE A FAVORABLE USG DECISION. AFTER ALL, THE FRENCH CONSIDER THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO OPERATE CONCORDE ON THEIR NORTH ATLANTIC ROUTES TO NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON, DC AND HARDLY APPRECIATE THE OBSTACLES WHICH THE US HAS PLACE IN THEIR PATCH. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD OVERLOOK THE ANGUISH WHICH THE PROLONGED AND ACRIMONIOUS US DOMESTIC CONTROVERSY OVER CONCORDE HAS CAUSED HERE, WHICH SUGGESTS THAT A FAVORABLE USG DECISION WOULD BE GREETED IN FRANCE WITH FAR MORE THAN JUST A SIGN OF SATISFACTION. IT WOULD PROBABLY BE VIEWED AS A COURAGEOUS ACT BY A GOVERNMENT PLACING PROPER IMPORTANCE ON THE VALUE IT ATTACHES TO ITS RELATIONS WITH FRANCE. THE DRAMATIC DENOUEMENT AFTER OUR LENGTHY DOMESTIC PROCEDURES HAD RUN THEIR COURSE WOULD MOST CERTAINLY INSTILL IN THE FRENCH A SENSE OF RELIEF THAT FINALLY IT WAS OVER--FOR THE TIME BEING--AND THEY HAD WON. WHILE GHE GRATITUDE OF REPUBLICS IS NOTORIOUSLY FLEETING, WE WOULD HOPE FOR SOME BENEFITS.

5. THESE BENEFITS MIGHT BE TRANSITORY AT BEST, HOWEVER, GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTIES THAT WOULD REMAIN ON HOW CONCORDE MIGHT FARE NOT ONLY IN NEW YORK BUT EVENTUALLY IN THE HANDS OF THE COURTS AND/OR CONGRESS. HENCE, WE WOULD NOT PROPOSE TO INITIATE HERE ANY SPECIAL PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN WELCOMING THE USG

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DECISION. WE WOULD ADVISE AGAINST A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO GISCARD, THROGH CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO A MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER TO THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER WELCOMING THE DECISION AND EXPRESSING THE HOPE IT WILL AUGUR WELL FOR CONTINUED CLOSE FRANCO-AMERICAN COOPERATION IN OTHER AREAS. THE REASON FOR THIS LOW-KEY REACTION IS, OF COURSE, SINCE CONTINGENCY (A) COULD SO READILY

BACKFIRE IF SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS DO IN EFFECT
RESULT IN CONCORDE BEING BANNED FROM THE US.
THIS ALL SPEAKS, WE THINK, TO THE DESIRABILITY OF
KEEPING THE EMPHASIS IN A CONTINGENCY (A) SITUATION ON
THE SOUND JUDGMENT THAT WILL HAVE BEEN DISPLAYED BY
OUR SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND ON THE DEMOCRATIC
PROCESSES INHERENT IN THE CAREFUL PROCEDURE (EIS, ETC.)
THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS FOLLOWED. IN SHORT, WE
SHOULD NOT DEPICT THE DECISION AS HAVING BEEN A
POLITICAL ONE FOR WHICH WE EXPECT ANY SPECIFIC
POLITICAL QUID PRO QUOS.

6. UNTIL THE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY HAS SPOKEN,
CONTINGENCY (A) IS OF COURSE ONLY HALF A LOAF FOR THE
FRENCH. BUT AT LEAST THE BIGGEST HURDLE WOULD HAVE
BEEN OVERCOME. SHOULD UNCERTAINTY PERSIST FOR LONG
OVER WHETHER LANDINGS WILL BE AUTHORIZED AT JFK, WE
COULD STILL STRESS THE POSITIVE BY POINTING OUT (1)
THAT ACCESS TO DULLES WILL PERMIT AIR FRANCE TO COMMENCE
US SCHEDULED SERVICE WITH CONCORDE AS PLANNED, AND (2)
THAT THIS GIVES THE FRENCH A FOOT IN THE DOOR AND COULD
IN TIME, IN THE LIGHT OF EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE WITH
DULLES SERVICE, INFLUENCE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY FAVOR-
ABLY TOWARD GRANTING LANDING RIGHTS AT JFK. (COMMENT:
WE ARE NOT SURE HOW VALID THIS LAST ARGUMENT IS, BUT IT
IS AT LEAST A DEBATING POINT HAVING SOME CREDIBILITY.)

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7. CONTINGENCY (B) WOULD, OF COURSE, BE THE IDEAL OUTCOME FOR THE FRENCH. OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDLING WOULD IN ALL LIKELIHOOD BE TWO-STEP OPERATION IN TIME UNLESS NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY DECISION WERE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER USG DECISION. MUCH OF THE CREDIT FOR JFK WOULD RUB OFF ON USG SINCE INITIAL FAVORABLE USG DECISION MADE ACCESS TO JFK POSSIBLE, PORT AUTHORITY COULD HAVE BEEN FAVORABLY INFLUENCED BY USG STRESS ON FOREIGN POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF CONCORDE BAN, SKILLFUL AND EXHAUSTIVE PROCEDURAL HANDLING BY DOT HAD DISARMED DOMESTIC CRITICS AND MADE PORT AUTHORITY DECISION EASIER, ETC. INAUGURATION OF PARIS-NEW YORK CONCORDE SERVICE WOULD BE OCCASION FOR FRENCH CELEBRATION BOTH IN NEW YORK AND PARIS IN WHICH PORT AUTHORITY REPS WOULD CERTAINLY FIGURE PROMINENTLY, WITH RESULTANT GENERATION OF GOODWILL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS BENEFITS.

8. CONTINGENCY (C) WOULD BE TRICKY TO HANDLE. MUCH WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY DISAPPROVAL OF CONCORDE LANDINGS WAS IRREVOCABLE, PROVISIONAL, OR CONDITIONAL. POSSIBLY SOME OFFSET
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VALUE MIGHT BE DERIVED FROM PARA 6 ARGUMENT ABOVE RE ADVANTAGES OF AT LEAST HAVING DULLES SERIVE. MAIN ARGUMENT FOR US TO STRESS WOULD OF COURSE BE THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION IS VESTED IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES WHOM FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS POWERLESS TO INFLUENCE. HOWEVER, FRENCH OPINION, FAMILAR WITH ITS OWN HIGHLY CENTRALIZED FORM OF GOVERNMENT, IS LIKELY TO REMAIN SKEPTICAL THAT US FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS REALLY "POWERLESS" TO INFLUENCE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AT NEW YORK. (ONE STILL ENCOUNTERS DISBELIEF IN SOME FRENCH CIRCLES, INCLUDING PARLIAMENTARIANS, THAT USG WAS POWERLESS TO INFLUENCE PANAM AND TWA DECISIONS TO DROP THEIR OPTIONS ON CONCORDE, FOR EXAMPLE.) HENCE, OUR DAMAGE CONTROL OPERATIONS IN THE EVENT OF CONTINGENCY (C) WOULD CONSIST OF MORE OF THE SAME OF THE ARGUMENTS THAT WE HAVE BEEN USING FOR A YEAR OR MORE, AND WITH SOME SUCCESS. FIRST, IT IS EVIDENT THAT THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR PROGRESS IN EDUCATING FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE US FEDERAL SYSTEM AND OUR SEPARATION OF POWERS. THE AIM WOULD BE TO TRY TO RESTRICT FRENCH RESENTMENT TO NEW YORK (AND TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES THERE) RATHER THAN TO THE US AS A

WHOLE (OR TO THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES). SECOND, WHILE AT LONG LAST THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT THE FRENCH ARE BECOMING MORE AWARE OF THE STRENGTH OF ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA, THERE IS STILL MORE TO BE DONE TO EDUCATE FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION STILL FURTHER ON THIS POINT. DESPITE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE CONCORDE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE RECEIVED IN THE FRENCH PRESS WE HAVE BEEN STRUCK (E.G., PARIS 32905) AT HOW ILL-INFORMED ARE FRENCH CIRCLES ONE WOULD NORMALLY EXPECT TO BE WELL CONVERSANT WITH THE REASONS FOR THE US DOMESTIC CONTROVERSY OVER CONCORDE. IN MANY INSTANCES IT MAY WELL BE A QUESTION OF THESE CIRCLES WILLFULLY NOT WANTING TO FACE THE FACTS OR CHOOSING TO IGNORE THEM. ON BALANCE, PROBABLY NO AMOUNT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIONS ON OUR PART WOULD OFFSET FULLY THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CONTINGENCY (C) BUT FRENCH COUNTER-REACTION WOULD PERHAPS BE RESTRAINED.

9. CONTINGENCY (C) WOULD ENABLE US TO POINT OUT,
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NOTABLY WITH THE GOF, THAT SINCE THE NEGATIVE ACTION HAD NOT BEEN TAKEN BY THE US FEDERAL AUTHORITIES, THAT ACTION SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO AFFECT THE STATE OF OUR GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS. THIS MIGHT ENABLE US TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE TO FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. THIS WOULD OF COURSE NOT HOLD TRUE IN THE EVENT OF CONTINGENCY (D), WHICH WOULD BE A CASE OF THE USG ITSELF REFUSING TO FOLLOW A COURSE THAT HAD BEEN URGED ON US REPEATEDLY BY THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOF AND BY FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION AND MEDIA.

10. CONTINGENCY (D)--A NEGATIVE USG DECISION ON AMENDMENT OF THE CARRIERS' OPERATING SPECIFICATIONS-- WOULD BRING DOWN ON US THE FULL WEIGHT OF FRENCH OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC OPPROBRIUM. IT WOULD BE VIEWED AS AN UNFRIENDLY ACT THAT COMPLETELY FORECLOSED CONCORDE'S CHANCES IN THE US, WITHOUT EVEN COMPELLING THE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY TO FACE UP TO TAKING A DECISION ITSELF. REACTION WOULD BE SHARP AND IMMEDIATE FROM BOTH THE GOF AND FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION. GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS IN PARTICULAR WOULD SUFFER. IT IS IN THIS INSTANCE THAT ADVANCE NOTICE WOULD BE ESPECIALLY DESIRABLE, SO THAT WE COULD AT LEAST GIVE THE GOF A BIT OF TIME TO PREPARE ITS OWN PUBLIC POSITION. A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO PRESIDENT GISCARD TO BREAK THE BAD NEWS WOULD BE IN ORDER, THOUGH WE HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE SEVERITY OF THE REACTION THAT WOULD IN ANY CASE OCCUR.

11. WE WOULD OF COURSE DO ALL THAT WE COULD HERE VIA PRESS, RADIO AND TV TO SEEK TO EXPLAIN AND JUSTIFY THE BASIS FOR THE USG ACTION. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT CERTAIN HOW READY AN AUDIENCE WOULD HAVE. IN SOME CASES ARGUMENTS WOULD BE THE SAME AS THOSE WE HAVE BEEN USING TO DATE TO EXPLAIN TO FRENCH AUDIENCES THE US DOMESTIC DEBATE OVER CONCORDE AND REASONS THEREFOR. WE MIGHT SEEK TO OUTLINE THE LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR THE PROCEDURES THE USG TOOK AND STRESS THAT AFTER A FAIR AND EQUITABLE PROCESS IN WHICH BOTH SIDES WERE FREE TO STATE THEIR CASE, THE USG TOOK THE ONLY DECISION DEEMED JUST WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF ITS OWN DOMESTIC
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LEGISLATION. WE MIGHT POINT OUT THAT THIS WAS NOT AN ANTI-FRENCH OR ANTI-BRITISH ACTION NOR WAS IT ONE TAKEN TO PROTECT AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTERESTS. WE MIGHT POINT TO OTHER AREAS IN WHICH THE US HAD TURNED DOWN MAJOR PROJECTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS (E.G., OIL REFINERIES IN MAINE AND ELSEWHERE, OUR OWN SST PROJECT) AND RECALL TO THE FRENCH AUDIENCE THAT FRANCE ITSELF IS NOT IMMUNE FROM SUCH PRESSURES FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL LOBBY (E.G., CONTROVERSY TOUCHED OFF ON ECOLOGICAL GROUNDS IN ALSACE AND ELSEWHERE ON LOCATION OF NUCLEAR POWER AND CHEMICAL PLANTS, PROTESTS OF AIRPORT NOISE BY COMMUNITIES IN VICINITY OF PARIS AIRPORTS).

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12. WE MUST HAVE NO ILLUSIONS, HOWEVER, THAT ANYTHING WE CAN DO OR SAY IS LIKELY TO MILLIFY THE FRENCH IN THE EVENT OF CONTINGENCY (D). CONCORDE IS A HIGHLY EMOTIONAL ISSUE IN FRANCE, AND NATURAL CYNICISM WOULD PROMPT THE FRENCH TO SEE OUR DECISION AS HAVING BEEN MOTIVATED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING BEHIND THE SMOKESCREEN OF CONCERN OVER PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT: A CONSCIOUS DESIRE TO KEEP OUT AN ADVANCED FRENCH PRODUCT, AN ABSENCE OF FAIR PLAY, AN ABANDONMENT OF EXECUTIVE COURAGE IN THE FACE OF LOCAL AND CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES IN AN ELECTION YEAR, A DEBASEMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO RELATIONS WITH FRANCE (AND IN OUR OWN BICENTENNIAL YEAR OF ALL TIMES), AND SO ON. FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION WOULD SIMPLY NOT BE DISPOSED TO LISTEN TO REASON AS WE ENDEAVOR TO EXPLAIN AWAY OBJECTIONS TO WHY THE USG TOOK ITS NEGATIVE DECISION.

13. AMONG RESPONSIBLE FRENCH CIRCLES, THE GOF REACTION WOULD OF COURSE BE CRITICAL IN THE CASE OF CONTINGENCY (D), BUT THE REACTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, INDUSTRY, LABOR AND THE MEDIA WOULD ALSO BE OF MAJOR CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPORTANCE. THE GOF, WE BELIEVE, WOULD ENDEAVOR TO AVOID A GAULLIST REACTION OR FRANNING THE FLAMES OF POPULAR WRATH. GISCARD HAS INVESTED ENOUGH TIME AND EFFORT IN THE PRESENT GOF POLICY OF AVOIDING UNNECESSARY CLASHES WITH THE USG AND INDEED LOOKS TO THE US TO HELP HIM FURTHER ENHANCE HIS IMAGE IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY. YET AT THE SAME TIME CONTINGENCY (D) WOULD CONFRONT GISCARD WITH DOMESTIC PRESSURES THAT HE COULD HARDLY IGNORE. HE WOULD BE FACED WITH TRUCULENT PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY OPINION THAT MIGHT NOT BE WELL DISPOSED TOWARD SEEING THE GOF PURSUE A POLICY OF FORGIVE AND FORGET TOWARD A PARTNER THAT HAD REFUSED TO ACCEPT CONCORDE. THE USG DECISION WOULD BE A SERIOUS SETBACK DOMESTICALLY FOR GISCARD AND HIS GOVERNMENT, OPEN TO ATTACK FOR HAVING BEEN UNABLE TO INFLUENCE FAVORABLY THE USG DECISION. THE GAULLISTS WOULD USE THE CONCORDE

PRECEDENT AS FURTHER AMMUNITION IN SNIPING AWAY AT ANY EFFORT BY GISCARD QUIETLY TO PROMOTE CLOSER FRENCH COOPERATION WITHIN NATO. AND EVEN GISCARD COULD HARDLY BE FORGIVING OF US FOR POSING FOR THE FRENCH THE PRACTICAL AND FRUSTRATING DILEMMA OF WHAT NOW TO DO WITH AN AIRCRAFT WHICH COST FRANCE \$1.5 BILLION TO HELP DEVELOP, WHICH THE GOF FOISTED OFF ON THE NATIONAL CARRIER AIR FRANCE, AND WHICH NOW CAN'T BE OPERATED ON THE BLUE-RIBBON NORTH ATLANTIC ROUTES FOR WHICH IT WAS PRIMARILY DESIGNED. AND FOR WHICH THE USG DECISION HAS EFFECTIVELY KILLED OFF ANY CHANCES THAT OTHER CARRIERS MIGHT ONE DAY PLACE ORDERS AND THUS PERMIT THE ASSEMBLY LINE AT TOULOUSE TO BE KEPT IN OPERATION AND JOBS BE PRESERVED IN THE PRESENT SHAKY SITUATION OF THE FRENCH AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY. SO WHILE BROADER CONSIDERATIONS OF NATIONAL INTEREST WOULD SEEM TO ARGUE AGAINST THE LIKELIHOOD THAT GISCARD WOULD LET A CONTINGENCY (D) SITUATION SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZE FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, WE HAVE REVIEWED (AND HAVE REPORTED) ENOUGH WARNINGS FROM GOF OFFICIALS OF LIKELY GOF RETALIATION TO MAKE US TAKE THESE WARNINGS SERIOUSLY.

14. INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE REPORTS THAT GISCARD
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TOLD PRESS ON JAN. 5 WHEN HE ANNOUNCED INTENTION FLY TO US VIA CONCORDE FOR HIS VISIT IN MAY, THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT DEBATE OVER CONCORDE "NOT (REPEAT NOT) BE POLITICIZED". WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT GISCARD STATEMENT THUS REPORTED IS AT VARIANCE WITH PRESENTATIONS MADE AT WASHINGTON HEARING ON JANUARY 5 BY FRENCH AND BRITISH REPS, WHOSE REMARKS WERE CERTAINLY CLEARED IN ADVANCE BY THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS. MOREOVER, MOST FRENCH COMMENTATORS TEND TO BELIEVE THAT IN ANNOUNCING HE WILL GO TO US IN CONCORDE GISCARD IS HIMSELF POLITICIZING THE ISSUE, E.G., LE FIGARO IN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL JAN. 6 SAW GISCARD'S REMARKS AS DEFT MANEUVER TO INTERVENE IN JANUARY 5 HEARINGS AND INFLUENCE AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION AND USG.

15. IN SPECULATING ON THE RANGE OF CONTINGENCIES, WE HAVE PURPOSELY NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE MANY DIFFERENT PERMUTATIONS AND COMBINATIONS THAT COULD RESULT IN THE EVENT OF INITIATION OF COURT ACTION AGAINST A DECISION OF THE USG OR THE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY. IT IS AN AREA TOO FULL OF UNKNOWNNS AND INTANGIBLES TO BE USEFULLY EXPLORED AT THIS STAGE AND AT THIS END. HOWEVER, IN GENERAL WE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE AN EASIER TIME EXPLAINING TO FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION ANY OBSTACLES

ENCOUNTERED IN THE COURTS THAN WE WOULD SHOULD THERE BE A NEGATIVE DECISION BY THE USG OR LATER BY THE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY. WE HAVE NOT EXPLORED EITHER THE VARIANT OF CONTINGENCY (D) WHICH WOULD BE REPRESENTED BY A LEGISLATIVE BAN ON CONCORDE LANDINGS OR ANY OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN TO FRUSTRATE AFFIRMATIVE DECISIONS TAKEN IN CONTINGENCIES (A) OR (B). THESE WOULD BE ONLY A DEGREE LESS PAINFUL TO EXPLAIN THAN AN EXECUTIVE BRANCH REFUSAL TO PERMIT AMENDMENT OF THE CARRIERS' OPERATING SPECIFICATIONS.

16. IN CONCLUSION, WE MAKE TWO REQUESTS:

(A) IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE BE GIVEN LEAD TIME TO PREPARE FOR LOCAL PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDLING OF SECRETARY COLEMAN'S DECISION. THIS WILL REQUIRE THAT WE KNOW AS FAR IN ADVANCE AS POSSIBLE WHAT THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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DECISION WILL BE. THIS WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE CASE OF A NEGATIVE USG DECISION (CONTINGENCY (D)).

(B) THE DEPT. AND USIA ARE REQUESTED TO PROVIDE US SOONEST WITH RELEVANT BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE US DECISION TO ABANDON SST DEVELOPMENT; MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE US THAT HAVE BEEN ABANDONED, MODIFIED OR DEFERRED MAINLY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS; AND ANY OTHER GENERAL MATERIAL THAT MIGHT PROVE HELPFUL TO US IN PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDLING OF THE ABOVE CONTINGENCY SITUATIONS. RUSH

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